

18.105 CIVILIAN OBSERVERS

Reference:

Procedure 12.021 - Visitor Identification in Police Facilities
Procedure 12.700 - Search Warrants/Consent to Search
Procedure 18.106 - Police Clergy Program

Purpose:

To develop an open relationship of integrity and trust with the citizens of the community by providing individuals an opportunity to observe the daily patrol operations of the Police Department.

Policy:

Civilian participation in Department programs is subject to certain provisions.

All civilian observers will participate in a uniform Patrol Bureau assignment. All requests by civilians to ride in an undercover assignment (Street Corner, General Vice Enforcement, etc.) must be approved by the Police Chief.

All persons observing police activities will sign a Release of All Claims (Form 612), except as noted in Section A.1.

Police Clergy Program members and nonsworn Police Department employees may ride at any time without prior scheduling provided space is available.

Civilians will not become actively involved in police incidents while accompanying a police officer. Their activity should be restricted to that of an observer.

Information:

All civilian observers (except Clergy and nonsworn employees) must have written permission from one of the following:

Police Chief

Bureau commander

Affected district/section commander

Community Oriented Policing (COP) Coordinator

Refer to Procedure 12.700, SEARCH WARRANTS/CONSENT TO SEARCH, Information and Policy sections regarding restrictions and guidelines for civilians, media, and third parties during the execution of a search warrant.

Procedure:

A. Processing Release of All Claims (Form 612):

1. The assigned officer will ensure a Form 612 has been completed for each observer before participation.
 - a. Nonsworn Police Department employees are not required to complete a Form 612, as long as they are observing in the performance of their job.
 - b. The police clergy's original Form 612 remains in force as long as they remain a Police Clergy Program member.
2. Processing Form 612 includes a records check which will be made using the Clerk of Courts web site (<http://www.courtclerk.org/>).
3. Note on the Form 612 the signature of the person performing the record check.
 - a. Civilians will not be permitted to ride if they have:
 - 1) Been convicted of any offense of violence.
 - 2) Been convicted of any serious misdemeanor.
 - 3) Any felony convictions.
 - 4) Any outstanding warrants or capiases.
4. Observers will be advised of the instructions on the Form 612.
5. All persons under 18 years old must have their parent(s) sign the parental consent portion of the Form 612.
 - a. The COP Coordinator or the district/section commander granting permission must verify parental consent.

6. File the original Form 612 at the district/section where the participant observes.
 - a. Forward a copy to the COP coordinator for his file.
 - b. Give the civilian a copy.

B. Scheduling Observers:

1. The COP Coordinator will process and schedule all observers except those directly approved by the bureau/district/section commander.
 - a. The COP Coordinator will schedule individual and organized groups referred by the police administration.
 - b. The COP Coordinator will not grant civilians permission to ride if they rode within the last six months, unless they are participating in the University of Cincinnati Internship Program or the Cincinnati Police Explorer Program.

C. Supervisory Responsibilities:

1. Determine the observer's assignment within the unit.
 - a. An insufficient number of field units may prevent observers from participating in a department program.
2. Determine if a radio is available for the observer's use.
3. List civilians participating as observers on the lineup.
 - a. The entry will indicate the identity of the observer, the police officer to whom assigned, radio number (if provided), and the hours.

D. Assigned Officer Responsibilities:

1. Instruct the observer on the rules of conduct listed on the Form 612.

2. Familiarize the observer with the operation of the police radio.
3. Instruct the observer not to view the Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) while in use.
 - a. Advise the observer that it is a violation of the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS) rules and regulations and can result in sanctions against the department.
4. Indicate the assignment of an observer on his Daily Activity Record (Form 436A).

E. Observer Responsibilities:

1. Present a completed Form 612 to the supervisor where the observer will ride.
2. Wear identification while in police facilities and while riding.
3. Refrain from looking at the MDT screen while in the vehicle.

F. Reporting Incidents:

1. Department employees will promptly report to a supervisor all cases of improper behavior or unusual occurrences involving a civilian observer.
 - a. Supervisors may refuse/terminate the observer's participation for:
 - 1) Improper dress.
 - 2) Improper conduct.
 - b. Document the refusal/termination on a Form 17.
 - 1) Route a copy to the COP Coordinator for filing.
2. If an observer is injured while participating in a Department program, a supervisor will document the details on a Form 17.
 - a. Route a copy to the COP Coordinator for filing.